

EDITORIAL STYLE



## ONLY AT ST. OLAF

- Um! Yah! Yah! (A popular phrase from — and title of — the St. Olaf fight song; note that an exclamation point and space follows each word)
- Fram, Fram, Kristmenn, Krossmenn (the motto of St. Olaf College; it means “Forward, Forward, People of Christ, People of the Cross”)
- Fram! Fram! St. Olaf! (A popular phrase and title of the college hymn)
- the Hill (“the” isn’t capitalized unless it’s at the beginning of a sentence: She loved her time on the Hill.)

## ALUMNI CLASS YEARS

When identifying current students or alumni by their class years, the two-digit year is preceded by an apostrophe. Do not insert a comma before the year.

- Right:** John Smith '87, Jane Doe '00  
**Wrong:** John Smith, '87, Jane Doe, '00

Identify alumni who have changed their names since birth, through marriage or otherwise, as follows: first name/birth name/present last name/class year. Do not set off birth names with parentheses.

- Right:** Jane Doe Smith '70  
**Wrong:** Jane (Doe) Smith '70

Identify alumni couples who share a last name as follows: first partner’s first name/birth name (if different)/ and class year followed by second partner’s first name/birth name/the couple’s present last name/and second partner’s class year.

- Right:** John '47 and Jane Doe Smith '45  
**Wrong:** John and Jane Doe Smith '47, '45  
**Right:** John Smith '90 and Jane Doe-Smith '90

*NOTE: Word will automatically insert the apostrophe curling the wrong way (e.g., '01). Type a space in after the year, and it will curl the apostrophe the correct way.*

## ALUMNUS, ALUMNA, ALUMNI, ALUMNAE

The word “alumnus” indicates a man who has attended or graduated from a school; an “alumna” is a woman who has done so. When referring to a group of men and women who have attended or graduated from a school or to more than one alumnus, use the word “alumni.” When referring to an exclusively female group, use the word “alumnae.” Do not use the phrase “alumni/ae” to refer to mixed groups.

## ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS, DIVISIONS, AND DISCIPLINES

Capitalize the full, formal names of academic departments, faculties, and divisions. Do not capitalize the names of academic disciplines.

- Right:** the Department of History, the History Department  
**Right:** She teaches mathematics.  
**Right:** She became the academic administrative assistant of the Mathematics Department in 2001.  
**Right:** He presented his findings to the Natural Sciences and Mathematics Faculty, one of the five divisions of the college’s academic program.

## ACADEMIC MAJORS

Except for languages (English, French, Norwegian, etc.) and studies related to geographical areas, the names of academic disciplines are not proper nouns and should not be capitalized. This includes references to disciplines in major fields of study, programs, and concentrations.

- Right:** He is a music major who also pursued Russian area studies.  
**Right:** He majored in American racial and multicultural studies and completed a concentration in financial management.

## ACADEMIC TITLES

Academic ranks and titles are specific and not interchangeable. It is not appropriate to bestow the title “Professor” upon someone who holds the rank of instructor — or vice versa. A person is “Professor of,” “Associate Professor of,” or “Assistant Professor of” a discipline or “Instructor in” a discipline.

**Right:** Associate Professor of Biology Jane Doe

**Right:** Jane Doe, associate professor of biology, will be the keynote speaker.

**Wrong:** Jane Doe is Associate Professor of Physics and Director of the Center for the Study of UFOs.

**Right:** Instructor in English William Shakespeare

**Wrong:** Instructor of English William Shakespeare

*Exception:* Titles of the holders of named professorial chairs are always capitalized in full, whether they appear before or after the holder’s name:

**Right:** Anton Armstrong ’78, the Harry R. and Thora H. Tosdal Professor of Music

**Right:** Tosdal Professor of Music Anton Armstrong ’78

*Note:* Never use courtesy titles (Dr., Mr., Ms., etc.)

## CLASSES

Do not capitalize individual class designations: first-year student, sophomore, junior, senior. (Note the hyphenation of the words “first” and “year.”) Do not capitalize generic references like “the senior class.”

Do capitalize the formal names of organized entities: the Class of 1979, the Class of ’92 Reunion Gift Committee.

## COMMAS

Use commas to separate elements in a series, and do put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series.

**Right:** The flag is red, white, and blue.

When “etc.” is used at the end of a series (and it should be used sparingly), set it off with commas.

**Right:** The professor discussed dates, tests, extra help, etc., during her opening remarks.

Use a comma for most figures greater than 999. The major exceptions are: street addresses, broadcast frequencies, room numbers, serial numbers, telephone numbers, and years.

Commas always go inside quotation marks.

**Right:** “When we arrive,” she said, “I want to go snorkeling.”

## “CONDUCTOR” VS. “DIRECTOR”

A “conductor” is “a director of an orchestra, choir, etc.,” according to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*, while a “director” is one “who directs a play, motion picture, etc.” Refer to the leader of a musical ensemble as “conductor” and to the person who oversees the production of a play — or the St. Olaf Christmas Festival — as a “director.”

## EMERITUS, EMERITA, EMERITI, EMERITAE

These titles are an honorable recognition of the service of those who have contributed substantially to the life and mission of the college. For faculty at St. Olaf, it normally is recommended by the dean of the college and conferred by the Board of Regents upon retirement. The word "emeritus" indicates a man who has retired from his rank or title; an "emerita" is a woman who has done so. When referring to a group of men and women who have retired from their rank or title or to more than one emeritus, use the word "emeriti." When referring exclusively to a female group, use the word "emeritae." The term should be included in academic titles as follows:

- Right:** Professor Emeritus of Music John Doe  
**Right:** Professor Emerita of Biology Jane Doe  
**Right:** Associate Professor Emeritus of English Jack Doe

## ENSEMBLES, TEAMS, ETC.

The words "band," "choir," "orchestra," "football," "soccer," etc., are not capitalized on second reference to one of those organizations.

- Right:** A member of the St. Olaf Band, he was pursuing an independent major through the Center for Integrative Studies.  
**Right:** A member of the band, he could usually be found at the center.  
**Wrong:** A member of the Band, he was also a familiar sight at the Center.

## NUMBERS IN DATES

Always use Arabic figures, without "st," "nd," "rd" or "th."

- Right:** October 16  
**Wrong:** October 16th

## PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER TITLES

Italicize the names of newspapers and magazines and the titles of books, journals, movies, television and radio programs, photographs, plays, art exhibitions, and collected works when they are in text; enclose the titles of articles, poems, and episodes of television programs in quotation marks. Fact-check the names of all magazines, newspapers, programs, etc.

## SEMESTERS

Do not capitalize fall semester or spring semester; Interim, however, is always capitalized.

## TIMES

Use figures except for noon and midnight. A figure alone without zeroes is sufficient for the top of the hour. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes. Do not put a 12 before noon and midnight. Do not omit the periods in a.m. and p.m.

- Right:** 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 3:30 p.m., midnight  
**Wrong:** 2:00 p.m., 5pm

## TITLES

In running text, titles are capitalized only if they directly precede the name of the individual. A title following the name of an individual or a title by itself is not capitalized. **However**, titles used in event listings or programs are capitalized in all instances.

- Right:** President Lars W. Boe will speak at the event.  
**Right:** Ole E. Rølvaag, professor of Norwegian, will speak at the event.  
**Right:** The president, Clemens M. Granskou, will speak at the event.  
**Right:** The crowd stood as the president of the United States entered.  
**Right:**

David R. Anderson '74, President  
Matthew Marohl, College Pastor  
Mary Walczak, Professor of Chemistry

*Exception:* Titles of the holders of named professorial chairs are always capitalized in full, whether they appear before or after the holder's name:

- Right:** Anton Armstrong '78, the Harry R. and Thora H. Tosdal Professor of Music  
**Right:** Tosdal Professor of Music Anton Armstrong '78  
**Right:** Anton Armstrong '78 is the Harry R. and Thora H. Tosdal Professor of Music

*Exception:* Some words identifying occupations or professions should not be capitalized even if they precede the name. Do not capitalize in instances such as:

- Right:** attorney Clarence Darrow  
**Right:** pianist Van Cliburn  
**Right:** music faculty member F. Melius Christiansen  
**Right:** basketball coach Pat Summitt

## URLS, WEB ADDRESSES

When including a URL in text in print, set the address in lowercase letters and italicize. Do not put "www" at the beginning of URLs. It isn't needed when typing in an address and looks antiquated.

## ***Still have questions? We have resources!***

The Chicago Manual of Style Online:  
*[chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://chicagomanualofstyle.org)*

Webster's New World Dictionary:  
*[merriam-webster.com](http://merriam-webster.com)*